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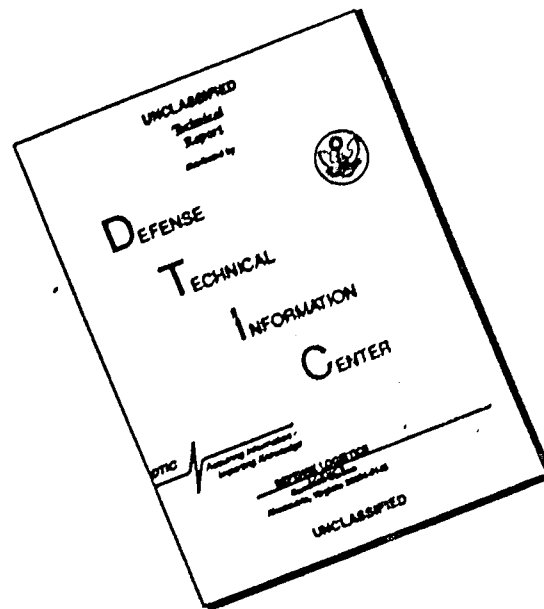
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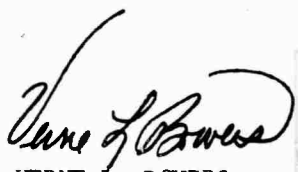
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DEBRIEFING REPORT
LIEUTENANT GENERAL JAMES W. SUTHERLAND, JR.
COMMANDING GENERAL
XXIV CORPS
(18 JUNE 1970 - 9 JUNE 1971)

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- H - Major Enemy Threat Areas in Northern Military Region 1
- I - Tailored US Force Structure (Distributed under separate cover to selected addressees.)

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INTRODUCTION

This report is submitted in accordance with AR 1-26 and USARV Regulation 1-3, and covers my tenure as Commanding General, XXIV Corps (18 June 1970 to 9 June 1971). I will include addressal of the friendly and enemy situation in June 1970; a view of the major operations and programs engaged in, together with an appraisal of their effectiveness and current status; the current overall situation; the status of Vietnamization; and a discussion of the more significant problems that will require continuing priority attention.

I have limited statistical data and detailed analyses to that required for continuity, clarity and emphasis; this is especially true for those subjects that are discussed in detail elsewhere, such as in afteraction reports, operational reports, lessons learned, and other historical reports. Also, I have touched only lightly on those areas that fall specifically within my role as Senior Advisor, I Corps and Military Region 1. This was done deliberately, since those areas were discussed in detail by my Deputy Senior Advisor, Brigadier General Charles A. Jackson, in his debriefing report forwarded separately on 26 May 1971, and which I fully endorse.

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MILITARY REGION I

The XXIV Corps area of operations is Military Region I (MR 1), the northernmost of the four military regions in South Vietnam. It extends from the demilitarized zone (DMZ) separating North Vietnam and South Vietnam south to the boundary with MR 2 - a distance of approximately 300 kilometers. The area varies in width from 60 to 100 kilometers, is bordered on the west by Laos, and contains five provinces (see TAB A).

The enemy divides MR 1 into three major tactical commands; namely, the B5 Front, Military Region Tri-Thien-Hue (MRTTH), and MR 5 (see TAB B). The B5 Front extends from about twenty kilometers north of the DMZ south to Route 9 and the Cua Viet River. MRTTH extends from Route 9 south to the Thua Thien - Quang Nam provincial boundary. MR 5 includes the remainder of the military region and extends into the MR 2 area. MR 5 is further divided into three sub-commands which are Front 4, the Quang Nam Provincial Unit and the Quang Ngai Provincial Unit.

Provincial designations differ between the GVN and VC. The area that GVN refers to as Quang Nam Province is called Quang Da by the VC. The area that GVN refers to as Quang Tin Province is called Quang Nam by the VC. Unless otherwise indicated, names of geographic areas appearing in this report are those used by the GVN.

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MISSION

My mission upon assuming command of XXIV Corps in June 1970 was to conduct operations in conjunction with South Vietnamese Forces to assure the security of the Vietnamese people by defeating the VC/NVA forces in MR 1; to assist the Vietnamese in strengthening their armed forces; and to assist in the strengthening of internal security by fully participating in the GVN Pacification and Development (P&D) Plan.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Exploitation of losses inflicted upon the enemy by committing regular forces to mobile operations against enemy forces, base areas, lines of communications, and logistics system in MR 1. Territorial Forces would place emphasis on maintaining security in secure areas and improving security in consolidation zones.

Transition to a security system that ultimately would permit reduction of the level of participation in operations by combat forces of the FVMAF.

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SITUATION IN MR 1 IN JUNE 1970

ENEMY STRENGTH: When I assumed command of XXIV Corps enemy strength in or capable of influencing actions in MR 1 was estimated to be approximately 76,500, including North Vietnamese Regulars, main force and local force units and guerrillas. These enemy forces were organized into a total of 29 infantry regiments, four artillery regiments, four transportation regiments, 18 sapper battalions, and nine rocket battalions, and were disposed as depicted at TABS C through G. In addition, there were an estimated 20,300 VCI (Viet Cong Infrastructure).

ENEMY CAPABILITIES AND VULNERABILITIES: Our intelligence indicated that the enemy was capable of pursuing the following courses of action:

Continue to prosecute the war at the then present levels, maintaining pressure on South Vietnamese and other Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF) by conducting attacks by fire, limited ground attacks, and light to moderate sapper attacks.

Conduct terrorist, political, propaganda and proselyting activities in conjunction with any of his courses of action.

Launch regimental to division size attacks across the DMZ and from western base areas toward the coastal lowlands, supported by all available artillery, with the intent of inflicting maximum casualties upon friendly forces and taking and holding population centers.

Increase these levels of military activity, launching periodic offensives of limited scope and duration.

Revert to guerrilla warfare with emphasis on the more traditional tactics of widespread hit-and-run raids, sabotage, terrorism, attacks-by-fire and intensified political-economic warfare.

Reinforce forces in MR 1 with two to three divisions from North Vietnam either across the DMZ or via the Laotian panhandle.

Defend positions just north of the DMZ with up to four infantry regiments supported by two sapper battalions and three artillery regiments; defend elsewhere in MR 1 south of Route 9 with forces locally available.

I expected that the enemy would continue to adopt the first and third courses of action throughout MR 1 and possibly adopt the second course of action in northern MR 1.

Balancing these capabilities were the following enemy vulnerabilities:

Massed enemy forces remained vulnerable to detection and subsequent destruction by tactical air, artillery, B52s, air rocket artillery and combat assault.

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Enemy forces infiltrating into the corps area of operations remained vulnerable to interdiction, artillery and aerial bombardment, detection and isolation by reconnaissance elements, and defeat by allied combat operations.

Enemy morale was vulnerable to psychological exploitation by propaganda concentrating on NVA/VC defeats in combat; failure of the NVA to support the needs and aspirations of the people, contrasted with the GVN ability to support these needs; fear of death; battle hardships; disease; and poor medical facilities.

FRIENDLY FORCES: Friendly combat forces in MR 1 in June 1970 were:

US - 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized) - Quang Tri Province.

101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) - Thua Thien Province.

III Marine Amphibious Force with the 1st Marine Division - Quang Nam Province.

23d Infantry Division - Quang Tin and Quang Ngai Provinces.

South Vietnamese - 1st Infantry Division - Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces.

2d Infantry Division - Quang Tin and Quang Ngai Provinces.

Quang Da Special Zone Forces - Quang Nam Province.

Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG)¹ with eight battalions located in Quang Nam, Quang Tin and Quang Ngai Provinces.

Regional Forces (RF), Popular Forces (PF) and Peoples Self-Defense Forces (PSDF) in all provinces.

Republic of Korea - 2d Republic of Korea Marine Corps Brigade - Quang Nam Province.

¹Now called Ranger Border Defense Command.

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VIETNAMIZATION

GENERAL: I came to XXIV Corps firmly convinced that Vietnamization was to be our primary task, and all of our military operations were planned and conducted not only to engage and destroy the enemy and his resources, but to increase the importance and scope of the tactical role played by South Vietnamese Forces as well. Thus, the benefits derived were two-fold; first, the notable successes of our tactical operations has seriously damaged the enemy's capabilities; and, second, South Vietnamese Forces have become stronger, more experienced, more assured, and, in general, better capable of making full Vietnamization a reality. It was our job to insure that the South Vietnamese exploited their capabilities to the fullest. Studies were conducted to identify force structure shortfalls and methods to bridge them. The process identified those US Army assets most essential in supporting South Vietnamese Forces and provided a de facto list of units for redeployment.

An expedient means of accelerating Vietnamization was the conduct of combined operations aimed at improving the security environment in specific areas. Such improvements reduced the requirement for US support, and made possible additions to redeployment lists. Operation LAMSON 719 is the prime example of such an operation.

Midway through my tenure of command, the Combined Campaign Plan 1971 was published. The plan changed the role of FWMAF from the 1970 concept of "to conduct operations" to the 1971 role of "to support and assist" South Vietnamese Forces. With this new role, the Combined Campaign Plan proved to be an excellent means of accelerating Vietnamization. It gave responsibility for the tactical area within MR 1 to ARVN. This action required US and FWMAF to request areas of operations (AOs) from ARVN and, in many instances, this was a complete reversal of the previous process. The result was that ARVN commanders were required to analyze their tactical areas of responsibility (TAORs) and arbitrate the assignment of AOs to all forces within TAORs. The process exercised ARVN staffs and stimulated development of coordination procedures which were not predicated upon the presence of a US headquarters.

LAMSON 719 - A TEST OF VIETNAMIZATION: Operation LAMSON 719 was a real test of the effectiveness of the South Vietnamese Armed Forces, and, as such, of the effectiveness of Vietnamization. While Vietnamese units received US air support and could call on US artillery when within range, they operated in Laos without US advisors and without the possibility of reinforcement or direct support by US ground combat forces. They carried the war into an enemy controlled area, far removed from the familiar confines of their normal areas of operation, all the while continuing operations in Cambodia and within their own country.

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The forces that participated in LAMSON 719 proved that the Republic of Vietnam possess a viable military organization that is significantly more capable, cohesive and better led than the military organization that existed during TET 1968, only three years ago. The overall results of LAMSON 719 indicate that Vietnamization is progressing well in MR 1. Not unexpectedly, some major shortcomings have surfaced, to include a lack of effective long-range planning by higher level staffs, a serious disregard for communications security, a general lack of a sense of supply discipline, and a failure to delegate authority to subordinates. These shortcomings must be corrected before the South Vietnamese can be considered to have reached full military maturity and these have become a matter of priority US advisor effort.

STRENGTHENING TERRITORIAL FORCES: Recognizing the need for a more aggressive role for the Territorial Forces (Regional Forces (RF), Popular Forces (PF) and Peoples Self-Defense Forces (PSDF)) especially in view of continuing withdrawal of US forces, each province in MR 1 initiated large-scale province-wide operations, commencing in August 1970. These operations utilize intelligence at all levels, are targeted against known and suspected enemy locations and cache sites, and have proven highly successful, especially in the southern three provinces of MR 1.

Paralleling these province operations, we placed increased emphasis on combined US/RF and ARVN/RF operations, usually attaching an RF company to a US or ARVN battalion. The program has successfully combined the skills of both elements and has served as an excellent training vehicle.

The 1971 Community Defense and Local Development Plan tasks the Territorial Forces to operate throughout the consolidation zone. To this end, RF units are steadily assuming AOs and defensive positions previously controlled by US and ARVN forces. However, progress in this area has been impeded somewhat by the lack of a clearly defined boundary between the consolidation and the clearing zone. Additionally, a major portion of the land mass in I Corps is dominated by US and ARVN forces, and redefinition of AOs has been required to provide the Territorial Forces with areas in which to operate. The RF is now assuming operational responsibility for broad areas of Thua Thien and Quang Tin Provinces from ARVN units.

Despite a continuing manpower shortage, the PSDF Program has progressed well, and all 1970 goals were met or surpassed. A high-quality training program is in being, and the PSDF are assuming the defense of villages and hamlets within the secure zone.

In the logistics area, plans for new physical facilities for the sector management and direct support logistics centers were approved by DOD.

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Notices to proceed were issued in September 1970. However, due to a last minute budget realignment, construction did not commence until the last quarter of CY 70. As of 30 May, approximately 30% of all construction was completed with a date of 1 December set for total completion. A further development is the "Buddy Training" System that is designed to enhance the technical skills of the Vietnamese. I supported this program with all available XXIV Corps resources and special use was made of those units preparing to stand down. The basic concept of the program consists of US personnel skilled in automotive repair, welding and other technical areas to present OJT to the Vietnamese.

In early 1970, it became apparent the US advisors were not sufficiently knowledgeable concerning the ARVN logistics system. To counter this problem, the ARVN Central Logistics Command established an orientation course for US advisory personnel. In support of this course, I Corps Headquarters established a three day informal orientation for all newly assigned logistics advisory personnel. The main purpose of this course was to acquaint US personnel with problems and procedures common to I Corps.

In addition, a joint US/VN Logistics Advisory Committee was established by XXIV Corps to insure that all assets available to the FWMAF were utilized in perfecting the Territorial Forces Logistics system. This committee, together with a Territorial Forces Logistics Study Group, has been instrumental in solving many existing supply problems.

THE PHUNG HOANG PROGRAM (THE ELIMINATION OF THE VCI): This program has made some progress during the past few months, but overall results have been somewhat disappointing. Frankly, most of the progress has been in administration and bookkeeping - in the preparation of dossiers, collection and collation of information, and the levying of EEI.

In an effort to bolster the program, village coordination centers have been established, the MR 1 Phung Hoang School has improved its training program, and a new chief of the MR 1 Phung Hoang Permanent Office was appointed. However, there is still a good deal of passive resistance to this program since it is patently a US and not a GVN program. There is an increasing awareness of the importance of the program, and continual emphasis is being placed on assuring that required improvements are made.

THE CHIEU HOI PROGRAM: During the period since May 1970, while improvement was made in the social welfare aspects of the program, particular emphasis was placed on Hoi Chanh exploitation for intelligence purposes, especially immediate tactical intelligence. Following the lead of the Vietnamese themselves, successful efforts were undertaken both to increase the quantity and immediacy of intelligence being received from Hoi Chanh. One result has been a growing number of highly successful raids in which Hoi Chanh lead friendly units against their former colleagues of a few days before.

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In late 1970, a program was initiated for training certain carefully selected Hoi Chanh as Phung Hoang interrogators. Although the first group has only recently completed training, the results to date seem promising.

Although emphasis was placed on exploitation, progress was made in the social welfare aspects of the program. Of eleven Hoi Chanh hamlets in MR 1, nine have been incorporated into provincial government administration and the remaining two are scheduled for early change-over. Vocational training for Hoi Chanh in MR 1 was initiated in September 1970, and two classes, one in automotive repair and one in carpentry, produced 69 graduates in May 1971. Further classes are planned in housewiring and in radio/TV repair.

UNATTENDED GROUND SENSORS: The unattended ground sensor (UGS) program in MR 1 has evolved from one of strictly target acquisition to a major source for collateral intelligence information. The transition to Phase III UGS, which was completed in May 1971, has improved the effectiveness of the program. The new equipment has enabled us to expand the coverage and the quality, and the capabilities of the new equipment have increased user confidence. The increased coverage has enabled us to monitor continuously all major infiltration routes in the northern two provinces in all weather. We are also using UGS to monitor potential landing zones and to obtain information for selection of targets for B52s, while continuing to provide valuable targeting information for artillery and tactical air. A combined US/ARVN sensor operations center has been established at Quang Tri Combat Base. This center is manned jointly by personnel from the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized) and the 1st Infantry Division (ARVN). The 23d Infantry Division in cooperation with the 2d Infantry Division (ARVN) is initiating a program whereby UGS monitor sites will be manned by both US and ARVN personnel.

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS (PSYOP): Capitalizing on the advantages of the mass media for informing and keeping the people of Vietnam cognizant of GVN programs and operations, the development and broadcast of regional and local interest radio programs is being increased. Two new radio stations in the Da Nang area are scheduled for completion in July 1971, and will provide a vital link in the national network. Television viewing coverage has improved with the completion of the new and larger facilities in Hue, and plans have been prepared to relocate the TV booster from atop the Hai Van Pass to Monkey Mountain which will assure better reception in Da Nang City and the lowlands of Quang Nam and Quang Tin Provinces. The Vietnamese Information Service (VIS) has recently obtained printing presses from the Joint US Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO) which have been distributed to publish posters and handbills which support GVN objectives for local self-defense, self-government and self-development. Increased emphasis has been placed on posters depicting GVN support for the flood victims, supporting the People's Information Program designed to ferret out

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the VCI, praising the PSDF, encouraging ralliers, and informing people about the "Land to the Tiller" Law. Operations have improved measurably in the past several months with VIS displaying more initiative and imagination, as illustrated by a VIS sponsored joint parade and rally honoring the troops that fought in Laos, and several public demonstrations against the VC.

Militarily, there have been renewed efforts to achieve desired behavioral responses in the VC/NVA and thereby contribute to the GVN Chieu Hoi Program and the successful accomplishment of the tactical operations.

Currently, two major PSYOP campaigns are in progress. The first is the rice denial campaign which is a US/GVN combined effort to disrupt and intercept enemy food gathering operations. One main objective of this campaign is to convince the Vietnamese people that their most effective weapon against enemy rice collection activities is complete cooperation with the GVN in reporting enemy rice gathering activities, and other Vietnamese merchants and farmers who illegally sell rice to the enemy. Another objective is to convince the enemy that they will lose men trying to obtain rice and that the people do not support their rice gathering activities. The second major campaign currently in progress is an intensified US/GVN effort to reduce the number of friendly casualties resulting from mines and booby-traps by inducing the civilian populace to locate and report or turn in enemy mines, booby-traps and munitions for cash awards. Results of both programs to date are encouraging.

CIVIL AFFAIRS: To enhance Vietnamization, we have emphasized self-help projects as opposed to unilateral military/civic action projects by US/FWMAF. Civic action programs are diverse, encompassing economic development, education, social welfare, transportation, communications and refugee support. Assistance is provided to schools, orphanages, hospitals, dispensaries and other worthy agencies, with the Vietnamese providing increased amounts of self-help labor and materials.

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PACIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

GENERAL: I feel very strongly that military successes are only the first step toward the objective of free and viable Republic of Vietnam, and that the essential second step involves complementary developmental programs to exploit the military successes to build a stronger nation. We have attempted to analyze each planned military operation to insure that every possible facet was fully exploited to improve the local security environment. Our engineer efforts provide an excellent example of this exploitation. Poor flying weather during the monsoon season increases our reliance upon land lines of communication. Consequently, our engineers are heavily committed to construction of secondary roads. Use of these secondary roads by military traffic enhances the security environment in the area, thus encouraging the populace to resettle along the roads and bring the land under cultivation. As the process develops, GVN control over the area is established and maneuver forces are moved further west allowing the process to regenerate.

US military and civilian agencies have afforded the GVN full cooperation and assistance in the undertaking of a variety of programs aimed at strengthening the economy and bettering the lot of the farmer and the working man. Some of the more significant programs are discussed below.

ECONOMIC REFORM: During the past several months, the economic reform measures promulgated by the central government in Saigon were particularly important to economic viability in MR 1. The prices of rice and other food commodities have been stabilized; direct importation of farming and fishing machinery has served to reduce prices while increasing availability; restrictions on inter-provincial trade have been eased. In addition, it appears probable that a high ranking Saigon official will soon be appointed as coordinator for development of central Vietnam. The presence of such a person in MR 1 will greatly facilitate both planning and coordinated development.

LAND REFORM: During the period May 1970 to May 1971, the Vietnamese Land Reform Program (Land-to-the-Tiller) was implemented in Military Region 1. The accomplishments within this program, while slight to date in MR 1, have included the complete organization and training of the required provincial staffs and village committees and the beginning of land distribution to tenant farmers. To date, over 8000 applications covering 1200 hectares have been received; 4000 applications covering 500 hectares have been approved; and 1200 titles covering 170 hectares have been presented to former tenant farmers. A highly desirable side benefit of the Land Reform Program in MR 1 is the compulsory registration of all land calling for the eventual issuance of new GVN titles to all legitimate owner-operators. This will provide replacement documents for the many land records lost or destroyed during the conflict and will standardize the entire land records system. Thus, all bonafide owner-operators will possess legal documentation to support ownership claims. The principal problem within the Land Reform Program in MR 1 is the question of communal land. A substantial segment of the population is opposed to the distribution of these lands which comprise a large percentage of the rice land in MR 1. The GVN recognizes the seriousness of

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the matter, and has postponed a final decision on communal land distribution pending further study of the impact of the program on the desires and welfare of the people.

AGRICULTURE: Priority attention is being given to increasing rice and protein production. These are of particular importance in MR 1 because the geographic area is historically food deficient. In August 1970, only two-thirds of the rice producing land was under cultivation, and approximately one-half of the rice requirements of MR 1 was imported. However, the land directed to "high-yield" rice has since doubled, and the total area under cultivation has increased by about 12 percent. As a result, imports have been reduced considerably, and the farmers are beginning to shift production resources to a cash crop that will generate an injection of money into the farm level economy. The protein production program has the objective of commercializing poultry and swine production near the large urban centers of Da Nang and Hue. To date, only limited successes have been achieved, but prospects for the future are optimistic. Swine were imported from the US as breeding stock, and, after initial reticence on the part of owners to accept advice, this stock is rapidly becoming quite popular. In poultry production, one hatchery is producing about 500 chicks each week and two additional hatcheries will be operative by December of this year and will produce an additional 1000 chicks each week.

INDUSTRY: Detailed plans are being developed for the conversion of an existing military base site into an industrial park. Sixteen local industries have expressed an interest in locating their operations at this site, and, hopefully, some will be operating there within the next two years. This park is a significant step in the industrial development of MR 1 and should serve as an incentive for additional industrial growth in central Vietnam.

Effective action was taken in the fall of 1970 to reduce restrictions off the coast of MR 1, and rich fishing areas previously off-limits were opened to Vietnamese fishermen. In addition, efforts are underway to demonstrate the advantage of using modern, efficient equipment and techniques. The first phase of the project was completed in March 1971 and consisted of practical training in the construction of a fishing vessel using a cement construction technique. Cement was chosen because it is relatively cheap, quite durable, and the vessel produced is about twice as efficient as the traditional wooden boat. The second phase of the project consists of actual demonstrations of this vessel at various fishing ports in MR 1.

WAR VICTIMS: There are a large number of refugees in MR 1 who have not yet received the payments-in-kind and cash to which they are entitled. I anticipate no problem in making these payments during the remainder of the year. I also do not believe that the numbers of new refugees and war victims which may be generated this year will present an insurmountable obstacle. Hence, the problem of paying refugee benefits should no longer remain a major one in MR 1 after this year.

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Social Welfare Services, which have primary responsibility for implementing refugee programs, are not development oriented. They have concentrated their efforts in making monetary and material distributions to a backlog of refugees who have been carried on official GVN refugee rolls since TET 1968. But, as this backlog diminishes, I expect that the heavily taxed social welfare services will be able to devote more time and attention toward refugee site development.

I am disturbed by the fact that a clearcut, well-defined Veterans Program has not yet been promulgated by the Central Government. Although Veterans housing has been authorized and funds provided therefore, this constitutes but a token gesture by the Government of Vietnam in coping with its overall veterans problem. I see this program as developing into one of the most important and complex in the future and one which will present a distinct challenge to resolution. We must seek clearer definition to the US advisory role in this area.

PUBLIC HEALTH: A major contribution has been made by the Military Public Health Assistance Program (MILHAP) teams attached to CORDS advisory teams in each of the provinces of MR I. These teams, administered and supported by the regional CORDS Public Health Division were initially tasked to assist in improving facilities, operation and medical care services of province hospitals. The degree of accomplishment of this objective has permitted increased attention to remaining assistance targets related to key public health programs at all provincial levels as well as strengthened medical care facilities and services at district and hamlet levels.

Progress toward total goals has been such that we have recommended orderly phase-out of these teams by late summer 1971, a year in advance of the original target date.

Another critical asset, particularly to medical care at the district and hamlet levels, has been the joint US/GVN Military Civic Action Program (MEDCAPS). It is gratifying to note the successful completion of US participation in these teams and the full assumption of responsibilities by ARVN medical units in recent weeks.

Other notable progress in public health has included the establishment and strengthening of programs for training key GVN medical or paramedical personnel on the job or through formalized courses and facilities. Training has been provided for a wide range of such personnel, including physicians, nurses, therapists, laboratory and X-ray technicians, and maintenance and logistics specialists.

In preventive medicine, we have assisted in the formation of GVN teams with epidemiologic prevention and control capabilities. Emphasis has also been placed on maternal-child health, nutrition, and population control with the establishment of educational programs and clinics in each of the provinces and some districts.

Assistance has also been provided in developing popular awareness of

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and support for the GVN "Sanitary Hamlet" Program. This has been conducted through the schools, TV and radio, PA systems, cartoon posters and a variety of other techniques. The GVN 1971 target of three such sanitary hamlets in each of the five MR 1 provinces will be achieved shortly and substantially exceeded before the end of the program year.

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CURRENT SITUATION

CURRENT ENEMY THREAT: Enemy strength available in or near MR 1 is currently estimated to be 58,100. This includes NVA, Main Force and Local Force units and guerrillas as well as four transportation regiments. The figure does not include Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI) of whom it is estimated there are 13,300. The enemy strength figures include both those units currently located within MR 1 and in the DMZ, and those units immediately available in North Vietnam and Laos. Changes in enemy dispositions from June 1970 to May 1971 are as follows: (see TABS A-G).

Quang Tri Province: A decrease of one infantry regiment (138th), one artillery regiment (78th) and one sapper battalion (K11).

Quang Nam Province: A decrease of three infantry regiments (31st, 36th and 141st) while smaller units (infantry battalions and miscellaneous armed units) now operating are equivalent in strength to a regiment.

Quang Tin Province: A decrease of two infantry regiments (1st and 3d), one mortar battalion (GK33), and one sapper battalion (GK35). These decreases all result from the redeployment of the NVA 2d Division to Laos.

Quang Ngai and Thua Thien Provinces: No change.

In the north, the enemy shows intentions of increasing the tempo and scope of operations. Prior to Operation LAMSON 719, he had built up three major threat areas in Northern MR 1. The first is in the area of the central DMZ, moving southeast into the heavily populated coastal lowlands. The second is eastward across the Vietnamese-Laotian Salient. The third is eastward from Laos across the northern A Sahu Valley (see TAB H).

During recent months, throughout MR 1, enemy tactics have placed an increased emphasis on sapper attacks and attacks by fire designed to inflict maximum casualties and damage to allied personnel and installations. The enemy has also stepped up his military and civilian proselyting activities, his campaign of terror and attacks against the pacification program. These forms of enemy activity reflect a protracted war policy, whereby he is attempting to cause maximum damage with minimum risk.

Looking at what the enemy has been doing in MR 1, we made a statistical analysis to identify trends which I believe is interesting. Reports on four types of incidents were compiled covering the period March 1970 through May 1971. The types of incidents were mines and booby traps, attacks-by-fire, enemy initiated incidents and terrorism.

The data on mines and booby traps encountered and incoming rounds show fluctuations but no discernable patterns. The data on enemy initiated incidents and on terrorism does show trends.

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Monthly totals of enemy initiated incidents varied between 1200 and 2000 from March 70 through September 70. Starting in October 70 and continuing through March 71, the monthly totals dropped dramatically to the 600-900 range. The initial drop may have been due to fall floods, but the lower level was sustained for six months. Following termination of LAMSON 719 in April, another sudden drop occurred with only 175 incidents reported for the month of April and 161 in May.

On the other hand, terrorist activities reached their highest point during the last four months showing an average of 310 incidents per month. This is significantly higher than during last years May/June high point of an average of 220 incidents per month. I think that this increase in terrorism demonstrates the enemy's determination to attempt to maintain influence on the population and discredit the GVN without committing his forces in major combat where he has been consistently defeated.

Despite this recent form of activity, I feel that the most dangerous long-term threat in MR I is the enemy's capability to launch multi-battalion to division sized attacks from threat areas in Laos and in the central DMZ area. His objective would be to secure the population centers in Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces.

In Quang Tri Province, the enemy appears to be limiting his summer offensive to areas that can be supported through the DMZ and the western Quang Tri road network. In this respect, he is minimizing the effect of losing unhindered use of Laotian base areas and in-country lines of communications. The 304th Division (Reinforced) has infiltrated the province from the north and west Quang Tri area and appears to be preparing for offensive action aimed at allied fire support bases in Quang Tri Province. While he has been able to infiltrate in relatively small groups to successfully attack through allied positions, he must again concentrate and expose himself to allied firepower. 1st ARVN Division elements along with the Vietnamese Marines are already meeting his formations in the Ba Long Valley and inflicting heavy casualties.

To succeed in entering the lowlands on a broad front, I believe he must overcome three major problem areas:

First, he must recoup his losses sustained in Operation LAMSON 719. Those losses were severe, and our current operations are also costing him men and supplies and are keeping him much further to the west in Thua Thien Province than in previous years.

Second, he must preposition enough food and ordnance to sustain a major campaign. In this, he is faced with serious problems; for example, a significant amount of his troops time is reportedly devoted to food production.

Third, he must develop sufficient support in the lowlands. In

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general, this is increasingly difficult to do other than by sheer terror coupled with his physical presence on the spot. His erratic rockets that land in civilian communities, the ferry boat that strikes a mine with large loss of life, and other senseless destruction do not win supporters for his cause. These activities must be counter-productive to his reported intent to establish a favorable political climate, locally procure food, and establish bases and caches for future operations. His attempts to alleviate these three problems provide the immediate threat in Northern MR 1.

In Laos the enemy is currently rebuilding his logistics network and refitting and training his forces. Below the central DMZ, he is conducting attacks by fire on fire support bases and allied troop locations and conducting water mining operations in the Cua Viet River. So far this year, there have been 81 mining incidents; in a comparable period of time last year, there were only 22. The enemy has initiated a campaign to infiltrate elements of his forces into the lowlands. Recent intelligence reveals his purposes are to establish a favorable political climate, procure food locally and establish bases and caches for future operations. As enemy units regain their combat strength, I believe he will endeavor to move his medical facilities eastward and reestablish his forward lines of communications. If successful, this would allow maneuver units to concentrate on training and positioning of forces for a general offensive later.

In the southern provinces, where the NVA threat is not as great as in the north, the main force and VC units, the guerrillas, and the VCI still pose a major problem. "Highpoints", normally lasting about six days, will continue to be characterized by isolated attacks by fire, attacks against pacification security elements, and attempts to interdict major lines of communications. In southern MR1, the enemy has placed increased emphasis on sapper attacks, and recent reports indicate that more infantry units are receiving training in sapper tactics.

The enemy has made his presence felt in the lowlands because he has not been as effectively separated from his source of survival, the people, as he has been in the northern provinces. For example, in the southern three provinces, it is estimated that there are approximately 11,200 VCI as opposed to only 2,100 in the northern two provinces. However, considerable progress is being made in reducing the ranks of the VCI in MR 1 with approximately 5,500 neutralized in 1969 and over 4,600 in 1970. The neutralization of VCI becomes significant when considered in terms of losses in trained, specialized personnel. This situation has forced the VC to rely on replacement personnel of lesser caliber and experience. In addition, particularly in the southern provinces, the enemy has been forced to reorganize his units to overcome this problem. District forces are being upgraded by the addition of replacements from NVA units, since the enemy is finding it increasingly difficult to recruit locally to fill his understrength units.

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Overall enemy losses for 1970 averaged about 4,000 per month. While the NVA and main force units seem to be receiving adequate replacements to maintain an effective combat strength, it appears the VCI, guerrilla and VC local forces are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit replacements. The strength of the VCI, VC Local Forces and guerrillas has been reduced from a pre-1968 TET high of over 70,000 to approximately 25,000. Reports indicate that the VC are leaning more and more toward forced recruitment.

I believe that the enemy will continue his attempts to interdict allied lines of communications south of the DMZ. We can expect a continuation of the attacks by fire, limited ground attacks and sapper attacks which have occurred during the recent surges of enemy activity. These will be targeted against fire support bases, pacification security elements, refugee settlements, and lucrative, high-value installations such as Da Nang Air Base. He will continue his attempts to destroy the pacification program by military means as well as by intensified political efforts in the form of propaganda, proselyting and terrorist activities. The enemy will almost certainly seek to take advantage of US withdrawal both as a propaganda theme and by seeking to exploit any resultant economic displacement, particularly in the urban area. With the buildup of the threat areas in the northern two provinces and the recent positioning of additional forces in western Quang Tri, a coordinated offensive effort appears likely in that area. A broader offensive appears unlikely at the present time, but is possible in late summer if the enemy can successfully recoup his losses in Laos and can extend his supply facilities and lines of communications eastward to forward staging areas near the lowlands. This, though, would carry him into the fall-winter monsoon season, which would likely delay any major sustained offensive until next spring.

CURRENT FRIENDLY DISPOSITIONS:

South Vietnamese: There has been no substantive change from the forces available in June 1970.

Republic of Korea: No change from June 1970.

US:

Redeployments: The III Marine Amphibious Force, with the 1st Marine Division (less the 3d Marine Amphibious Brigade) executed stand down orders in May 1971 and has redeployed to Okinawa and Camp Pendleton, California. The 3d Marine Amphibious Brigade (consisting of the 1st Marine Regiment and Marine Air Group 16) has completed its stand down and will be redeployed by the end of June 1971. In addition, three infantry battalions (two from the 23d Infantry Division and one from the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile)) will complete redeployment to the US by the end of June 1971.

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Forces remaining: The 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) remains in Thua Thien Province and the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized) remains in Quang Tri Province. The 23d Infantry Division has assumed the tactical area of interest and the mission of the III Marine Amphibious Force and has moved the 196th Infantry Brigade into Quang Nam Province. As a result, the 23d Infantry Division is now spread over the three southernmost provinces in MR 1. The 11th Combat Aviation Group (CAG) is assuming the missions of MAG 16 and on 1 June the Marble Mountain Air Facility became the Marble Mountain Army Airfield, operated by the 11th CAG.

CURRENT SECURITY SITUATION: Quang Tri and Thua Thien are both relatively pacified provinces, and security is static. The province chief in Quang Tri has secured the lowlands and the enemy is contained by ARVN and US AOs. The area is secure; however, we cannot expect dramatic improvements.

Security is also static in Thua Thien, but for a different reason. I suspect the province chief has been tasked by President Thieu to "keep the lid" on the province politically, and, consequently, he is maintaining the status quo. Security could be improved if the province chief would be more aggressive in using his territorial forces. Phu Loc district just north of Hai Van continues to be a source of trouble that was caused by the district chief. The district chief was development oriented and his problem was security. He seemed to ignore the need for security and to hope things would improve. He has recently been transferred to Hue where there are development problems and a new man who is security oriented has been given Phu Loc district. So improvements should begin materializing there. However, the apparent inability of the Vietnamese to really fire an incompetent remains a frustrating problem. We also have had trouble getting the 1st ARVN Division and province officials to coordinate lowlands security. However, this has not been the case recently, and I think the Vietnamese have a good start on working their coordination problems out.

Quang Nam Province has a serious security problem. Present force levels in the province are inadequate to maintain the security level we had prior to US Marine redeployments, since we have only the 196th Brigade and the 11th CAG replacing the 1st Marine Division and Marine Air Group 16. Coordination between Vietnamese agencies has been a problem in the province, but this has improved recently, and I think the problem is on the way to working itself out.

Quang Tin is a real bright spot in MR 1. The province can be considered Vietnamized, and most of the 2d ARVN Division is working well to the west. Of interest are the reasons for this success. I think the success is keyed to dynamic leadership and rapid reaction to enemy threats. The province chief is a dynamic leader and the people have identified him favorably with the government. Also, he always reacts aggressively to enemy threats.

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Real problems seem to be surfacing in Quang Ngai Province. The Province Chief lacks the talents of the Province Chief of Quang Tin, and the 2d ARVN Division, a demonstrated outstanding tactical unit, is required to exert the bulk of its energies toward tactical requirements and not pacification efforts. In the past, US forces provided the impetus toward pacification goals. Now, however, with continuing US withdrawals, the situation is becoming particularly acute.

There is a very real danger of the GVN losing control over Duc Pho District, and Route QL 1 in that area will be interdicted on a regular basis. The big problem in that district is an incompetent district chief who should be replaced as soon as possible. -

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PROBLEM AREAS

EFFECTS OF US WITHDRAWALS: A problem area that is just beginning to surface in MR 1 is the impact that full-scale US withdrawals will have on the populace. The effects will be felt by virtually all inhabitants in descending degree from those who are directly employed at US installations, to contract and service personnel who are not directly employed, to those who rely on the direct or indirect employees as a source of livelihood. Also, the psychological effects may be pronounced. The people are accustomed to US presence and tend to equate US presence with their security. Even if, in fact, they are as secure after we leave, they may not think so. Overall, the initial impact will be significant, and steps must be taken early to anticipate problems and either negate them or control them if they do develop. Certainly, the opportunity to foster anti-US feelings by emphasizing any reduced employment and the real or imagined degrading of security will, as in the past, be exploited by the VC, and, at a very minimum, political demonstrations are to be expected. Some disturbing indicators have been appearing with increasing frequency, and there appears to be a growing resentment among the populace. I feel the fact that we are pulling out is contributing materially to this resentment. They are forcing confrontations and if this continues, we may have to reduce our exposure to the population and maintain a lower profile. If the frequency and seriousness of these confrontations is allowed to get out-of-hand, it might even become necessary to develop enclaves in selected areas with excursions limited to convoy movement.

REDEPLOYMENT: There are several other well-defined problems associated with redeployment. The first is Vietnamization of our AO's as we redeploy. Since we are not able to discuss the withdrawal of our units from their AO's with the I Corps Commander and his staff much in advance of withdrawal, I anticipate some turmoil in the redisplaying of ARVN forces to best compensate for redeploying US battalions. I have encouraged General Lam to develop plans for redisplay in both northern and southern MR 1 without revealing who will redeploy and when. This will be a continuing problem until the support forces level is reached.

The other problem area associated with redeployment, and probably the most formidable one facing us at this moment, is the timely disposal of real estate and facilities. The Vietnamese, so far, have been unable to accept the transfer of bases in a timely fashion. A significant contributing factor here is of our own making in that we are hamstrung by security requirements. Unless we can give a full picture, the Vietnamese cannot really make well-founded, timely decisions as to their wants and needs. Frankly, the close hold nature of redeployment planning has made the offering of US bases appear random to the Vietnamese. Unless we can ease the situation, we may have to divert large numbers of combat troops to guarding installations until the Vietnamese can reach a decision and accept tenancy. In an effort to ease the situation, on 1 June, General

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Lam was briefed by XXIV Corps on the problem in general terms and given a list of all US installations and their capacities. He was asked to have his staff survey these bases and determine those his forces needed. I hope this will have a beneficial result, but it is too early to tell.

RVNAF ABILITY TO "GO IT" ALONE:

A problem of major concern is RVNAF's ability to cope with the main force threat after the redeployment of remaining US units. I feel that present ARVN force permanently stationed in MR 1 is inadequate to accomplish this mission, and have concluded that the force required in MR 1 is four standard ARVN infantry divisions.

In northern MR 1, I think 24 infantry battalions and two cavalry squadrons can cope with the enemy threat after we redeploy. The units would be deployed under two division headquarters. Each division would have a province as its TACR, one in Quang Tri and the other in Thua Thien.

In Quang Nam Province, I do not consider the 1st Task Force and its normal elements adequate to provide security after we leave. A standard infantry division with necessary support and commanded by a general officer is required. Presently the responsibilities of the 1st Task Force Commander, the province chief, and the Da Nang Special Sector Commander often overlap and, in cases, are vague. All three commanders are of the same grade, work directly for the Corps commander and compete for available resources. Formation of a division in Quang Nam would do much to eliminate this problem.

I think the 2d ARVN Division is an adequate force for the southern two provinces, but needs to work on lowland security in Quang Ngai as I discussed earlier.

To sum up, there is a requirement for two additional headquarters with appropriate combat support and service support. Reorganization of 1st Infantry Division, deactivation of 1st Task Force and utilization of the Ranger Group would provide 40 of the 48 infantry battalions required for the force structure for the four standard ARVN divisions. A source of the additional eight infantry battalions is the eight Ranger Border Defense battalions in the MR 1 Ranger Command. By incorporating these battalions into regular ARVN divisions, the need for the MR 1 Ranger Command Headquarters would be eliminated and those assets would become available to form new headquarters elements. It would be necessary to form eight additional RF battalions to occupy the present ranger border defense camps.

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Figure 1 shows in numbers of type units the existing and the required force structure.

MR 1		
FOUR DIVISION		
FORCE STRUCTURE		
<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>REQUIRED</u>	<u>AVAILABLE</u>
Division HQ	4	2
Infantry Regt	12	9
Infantry Bn	48	36
Cavalry Sqdn	4	4
Artillery Bn (105)	12	8
Artillery Bn (155)	4	4
Engineer Bn	4	2
Signal Bn	4	2
Logistics Bn	4	2
Medical Bn	4	2

FIGURE 1

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Figure 2 depicts the application of assets available through reorganization and deactivation of units and headquarters.

SHORT FALLS - SOLUTIONS			
<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>SHORT FALL</u>	<u>SOLUTIONS</u>	<u>UNRESOLVED</u>
Infantry Bn	12 Bn	(1) Reorganiza- tion of 2d and 51st Regiments and Ranger Group 4 Battalions (2) Ranger Border Defense Battalions 8 Battalions TOTAL 12	None
Artillery Bn (105)	4 Bn		4 Bn
Engineer Bn	2 Bn		2 Bn
Signal Bn	2 Bn	1st Div & MR 1 Ranger Command 1 Bn (-)	1 (+) Bn
Logistics Bn	2 Bn	1st Div & MR 1 Ranger Command 1 Bn (-)	1 (+) Bn
Medical Bn	2 Bn	51st Inf Regt - 1 Company MR 1 Ranger Command - 1 Detachment	2 (-) Bn
Headquarters Elements and Division Troops 2246 Spaces		1st Task Force, MR 1 Ranger Com- mand, and 1st Division TAC CP - 525 Spaces	1721 spaces

FIGURE 2

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Figure 3 summarizes the resources that would be required from outside MR 1 to meet the four division force structure. I believe this structure will prove adequate to allow GVN to assume the total military effort in MR 1. If 7267 added ARVN spaces is too large a price to pay, it would be possible to use available resources and form two light infantry divisions with three regiments of three battalions each, or two regiments of four battalions each. I do not favor this solution and I believe a manpower increase of 7267 ARVN spaces plus approximately 3700 RF spaces is a reasonable price to pay in resolving the security and control problem in MR 1.

UNRESOLVED REQUIREMENTS

<u>REQUIREMENT</u>	<u>NO UNITS</u>	<u>SPACES</u>
Artillery Bn (105)	4	1972
Engineer Bn	2	874
Signal Bn	1 (+)	507
Logistics Bn	1 (+)	1332
Medical Bn	2 (-)	861
HQ Elements & Div Troops		1721
	TOTAL	7267

<u>OFFICER</u>	<u>NCO</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
650	1814	4803	7267

FIGURE 3

VNAF SUPPORT: I foresee problems in VNAF helicopter support. The first problem is adequacy of VNAF helicopter units programmed for MR 1. VNAF currently has one UH1 and one H34 squadron operational and is programmed to have two additional UH1 squadrons operational by December 1972. These UH1 assets will be adequate if they are not all stationed in Da Nang as currently planned. I think a squadron should be based in northern MR 1, probably at Phu Bai, and a second should be in southern MR 1, probably at Chu Lai. The remaining two squadrons could provide support from Da Nang. VNAF presently is reported to have only a limited capability to support operations from forward operating locations because of inadequate maintenance capability and parts shortages. The VNAF technical wing may not be properly organized to support multiple site operations. Once maintenance spaces are filled with qualified personnel, VNAF should be

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capable of co-locating with ARVN at Phu Bai and Chu Lai. They should exercise that capability.

The second VNAF problem is that only one CH47 squadron is programmed for support of MR 1 and MR 2, and it is not to be operational until March 1973. Our studies indicate that this is inadequate and will not do the job after we have redeployed. We are currently averaging 1950 hours of medium helicopter support per month to ARVN. With the programmed VNAF CH47 squadron, there will be a 990 hour per month short-fall, and this short-fall is aggravated by what we feel will be inadequate VNAF fixed wing support. If a second CH47 squadron were programmed for MR 1, VNAF would have a 1929 hour per month capability. With careful control of aircraft usage, this should prove adequate for continuing ARVN requirements in MR 1.

RVNAF STAFFS: During the past year, RVNAF staffs have made great progress and have become increasingly proficient as they gained experience. I have continuously sought to strengthen the ARVN staffs in MR 1 and give them the responsibility to run the war. The combined campaign plan provided an excellent vehicle for doing this as it gave ARVN TACR responsibility for the MR, and we stepped back to a TAOI role. The concept is working, but must be continuously watched to preclude retrogression; also, while large operations like LAMSON 719 and LAMSON 720 exercise the ARVN staffs, we must insure that VNAF is included in the planning and conduct of these operations.

VNAF/ARVN RELATIONS: In general we must do all that we can to foster a good ARVN/VNAF relationship. VNAF fighter pilots are good, but their FACs and helicopter units leave a lot to be desired. There are few air-ground coordination elements available in VNAF (TACPs, Air LNOs, etc) and, as a consequence, they do not control their assets. A real need exists to get VNAF involved in tactical planning with ARVN. Without air-ground coordination elements to do the planning and coordination, the need will not be met.

ENGINEER SUPPORT: An area of great concern is the ARVN engineers. The Vietnamese system does not provide a single manager for the funding, programming and assignment of engineer missions. Responsibilities are divided in these areas between ARVN, the Ministry of Public Works and the Central Logistics Command. I feel that this should be changed and all responsibilities placed under centralized authority to insure a better coordinated engineer effort. Probably the best centralized authority is the I Corps Engineer.

STAYING ABILITY OF THE RF: We need to give serious consideration to increasing the staying ability of the RF. By staying ability I mean the ability to remain in the field for several consecutive days and nights. I feel that this can be done by reorganizing RF battalions without an increase in personnel requirements and with only a modest increase of commonly available equipment such as light vehicles,

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machine guns and radios. Also as pacification and development progresses, the Territorial Forces are assuming increasingly more mobile roles. I think a second modest increase in vehicles for the supply, maintenance and direct support logistics centers, and province support companies would assist territorial force mobility. Presently our RF units are given a lower priority for supplies than ARVN, and the supply, maintenance and direct support logistics centers were established when Territorial Forces were static.

I have my staff currently searching for an economical way to form RF battalions with staying ability. The RF battalion does not have nor does it need the staying power of an ARVN battalion. Its present ability must be upgraded to somewhere between an RF company group and an ARVN battalion. There is a need for such a improved capability and the need is increasing as we enlarge secure areas and consolidation zones.

Additional efforts to improve Territorial Forces center around combined operations with US units which train RF/PF in the operational areas where they must work and give them confidence to carry on by themselves. Above all, US units assist by providing a physical presence while the Territorial Forces work out their own problems.

REFUGEES: There are almost 60,000 refugees in MR I. Problems associated with resettling these people are substantial, and will get much worse if our refugee programs are inadequately funded. Our progress in resettlement has been good - we exceeded our goals last year by 15% - and thus far in 1971 we have achieved 50% of our goal and are ahead of schedule. However, many refugee sites are substandard. Presently out of 253 total sites, there are 166 substandard sites with 134 in Quang Ngai alone with serious deficiencies. Vietnamese lack of concern may cause American funding support to be terminated. The way to prevent this is to encourage the refugees to help themselves by cleaning up and rebuilding substandard sites. US units can and should assist by making themselves and their equipment available to help.

However, the major problem area centers on the many displaced persons not classified as "refugees" or "war victims" who still need to be resettled to sites where they can earn a living or who will need some assistance in adapting to an urban environment. Barring major natural disaster, on-going efforts should significantly reduce current totals. However, resettlement for most of these people will not be feasible in the foreseeable future. Site improvement in place thus becomes essential. US agencies have worked closely with the Ministry of Social Welfare to survey these sites in each province in MR I as a basis for effective site upgrading efforts. It is urged that the next year or two see meaningful projects to achieve this objective.

THE ECONOMY OF MR I: Economically MR I must become, as a minimum, self sustaining. MR I is an economically depressed area. It does not have the agricultural potential found in the south and, at best can only support light industry. As a result the region is suffering

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under a low priority when competing against MR 3 and MR 4 for development assets. I think it is necessary for GVN to establish some sort of federal government economic representation within the region. We need a man of ministerial rank with the authority to not only coordinate federal programs within the region but address the region's relationship with the federal government as well.

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GENERAL COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS

DISRUPTION OF NVA SUPPLY MOVEMENTS IN LAOS: Probably one of the single most important accomplishments which has been realized since June 1970 has been the disruption of NVA supply movements through the eastern portion of the Laotian infiltration network adjacent to MR 1 which has seriously hampered the ability of the NVA to wage war in South Vietnam and Cambodia. Although daily efforts are made to slow the supply movement by striking trucks, storage areas, and checkpoints, there have been three major setbacks to the NVA's efforts which stand out.

The first of these setbacks was originally termed by 7th Air Force as possibly one of the most significant actions of the war. During the seven day period 19 December 1970 to 25 December 1970 an NVA supply area in the vicinity of Ban Bak, Laos, was struck resulting in over 6300 secondary explosions. This total is larger than the number of secondaries during the entire previous dry season in this region of Laos.

The next setback was a result of LAMSON 719. The NVA's losses of personnel and supplies have surely disrupted plans for any early offensive. Not only were supplies depleted through capture and consumption, but the NVA were also denied a period of stockpiling within the LAMSON area.

Thirdly, and of equal, if not greater significance than the first two setbacks, is the resulting denial of the use of the Xe Bang Hiang water transportation system due to its deterioration and destruction during LAMSON 719. It appears that it will be very difficult for the enemy to rebuild this system during this current wet season. This system during the last wet season was responsible for the movement of approximately 290 tons of supplies per week during peak use.

ENEMY TACTICS DURING LAMSON 719: Operation LAMSON 719 revealed a great deal about the enemy's tactics during very heavy, intensive action.

His air defense tactics followed those previously displayed in North Vietnam, showing a well-integrated, sophisticated, and highly mobile air defense system.

The enemy frequently used "hugging" tactics¹ to give protection from allied artillery and air strikes. This enabled him to bring a heavy volume of short-range small arms, AA, and RPG fire against helicopters flying in and out of the friendly positions.

Multiple AA weapons were sometimes utilized, one to attract gunships and the others to place fire on them.

¹The enemy's practice of positioning forces so close to the friendly units that indirect fire and tactical air strikes cannot be employed effectively against the enemy without endangering the friendly units as well.

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Indirect fire techniques were effectively utilized by the NVA to defend against the establishment of fire support bases. One of these was to place 82mm mortars approximately 3000 meters from hill tops, positioning them so that one weapon could engage several possible bases. Once established, fire bases were attacked during resupply missions from a mortar belt around the base. Mortars, long-range artillery and rockets were used to maintain pressure on the bases. The effectiveness of these tactics suggests that their artillery units were well trained.

RELIANCE ON THE HELICOPTER: While the helicopter has proved itself to be invaluable in this environment, I believe there is a growing tendency to place too much reliance on it, as opposed to the application of proven tactics which apply whether or not helicopters are available. There is a great inclination to move forces rapidly from one point to another, not searching any one area thoroughly and overflying both the enemy and the civilian populace, both of whom would be affected by our physical presence on the ground. Some commanders want to use cavalry-type tactics in all situations, whether or not they are applicable. Some seem to have come to regard the helicopter as the end itself rather than the means.

TAILORED US FORCE STRUCTURE: Obviously, the redeployment of US forces is a major factor influencing the friendly situation. As we redeploy, we must continue our support and assistance to ARVN to provide the most that we can within our declining capabilities. The coming summer months will be critical for MR 1 as the ARVN, with our help, attempt to advance pacification and resettlement in the lowlands. Progress in these areas will be critical to the present government in the October elections. After the summer period, our ability to significantly assist ARVN will be diminished.

Vietnamization has governed development of operational concepts and redeployment planning in XXIV Corps. The first step in defining these concepts was to study RVNAF in MR 1 to identify shortfalls. Once these shortfalls were identified, they were quantified and related to specific US units which could most assist RVNAF in bridging them. The remaining units then became candidates for redeployment.

The minimum US force level identified was represented by a tailored support force in northern and southern MR 1 which I proposed to MACV in March of this year. In recommending packages of units for redeployment schedules, we are exercising care to insure units essential to support of RVNAF are not included in early redeployment. These essential units and additional discussions are contained in TAB I.¹

¹Because of the close hold nature of the information regarding this force structure, TAB I is being distributed under separate cover to selected addressees.

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SUMMARY

My predecessor, in his debriefing report, stated that "Our goal in XXIV Corps has been to work ourselves out of a job". This has remained our goal, and I feel that we have made significant advances in that direction.

Although the US role during the year became one of support and assistance, military achievements in MR I have been impressive. The increased operational role played by South Vietnamese Forces attests to their budding maturity and their developing ability to cope with the NVA/VC threat in MR I after all major US ground forces have been withdrawn. The problems confronting Vietnamization I have presented in the report are the predictable result of the rapidly expanding Vietnamese capability to assume full responsibility for running the war and the concomitant redeployment of US forces. I am confident that those problems are not insurmountable.

Complementary GVN political, economic and social programs and reforms have not progressed at a rate comparable to the maturation of the Vietnamese military establishment. I feel very strongly that concerted priority efforts must be exerted to correct this, because, in the final analysis, it is this dual development, the military and the civil, that will serve as the basis for the ultimate, meaningful and lasting success of Vietnamization.

Concurrent with my departure, I sent a farewell letter to General Lam, the Commanding General of I Corps and Military Region I. In addition to expressing my pleasure at being associated with him, the men of I Corps and the people of South Vietnam, I brought to his attention those key problems that require continuing emphasis. In addition to discussing many of the problem areas contained in this report, I also presented other areas that require priority attention. The major areas presented in the letter to General Lam included:

The requirement to improve positive control and management of material resources or face the loss of congressional support in the US.

The need for RVNAF to maintain a favorable image in the eyes of the people.

The need for ARVN to avoid looking down on Territorial Force, and, instead, to join them in securing the population.

The requirement to improve the image of the military and civilian leaders.

The requirement to improve services to the military and to veterans and improve survivor assistance.

The requirement to insure that command and control relationships are defined and followed.

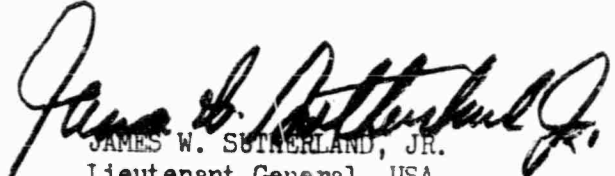
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The continuing need for high quality training and retraining.

The need to recognize outstanding performance and ability with promotion, and the quick relief of incompetents.

I feel that General Lam will do all he can to make the required adjustments and corrections.


JAMES W. SUTHERLAND, JR.
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

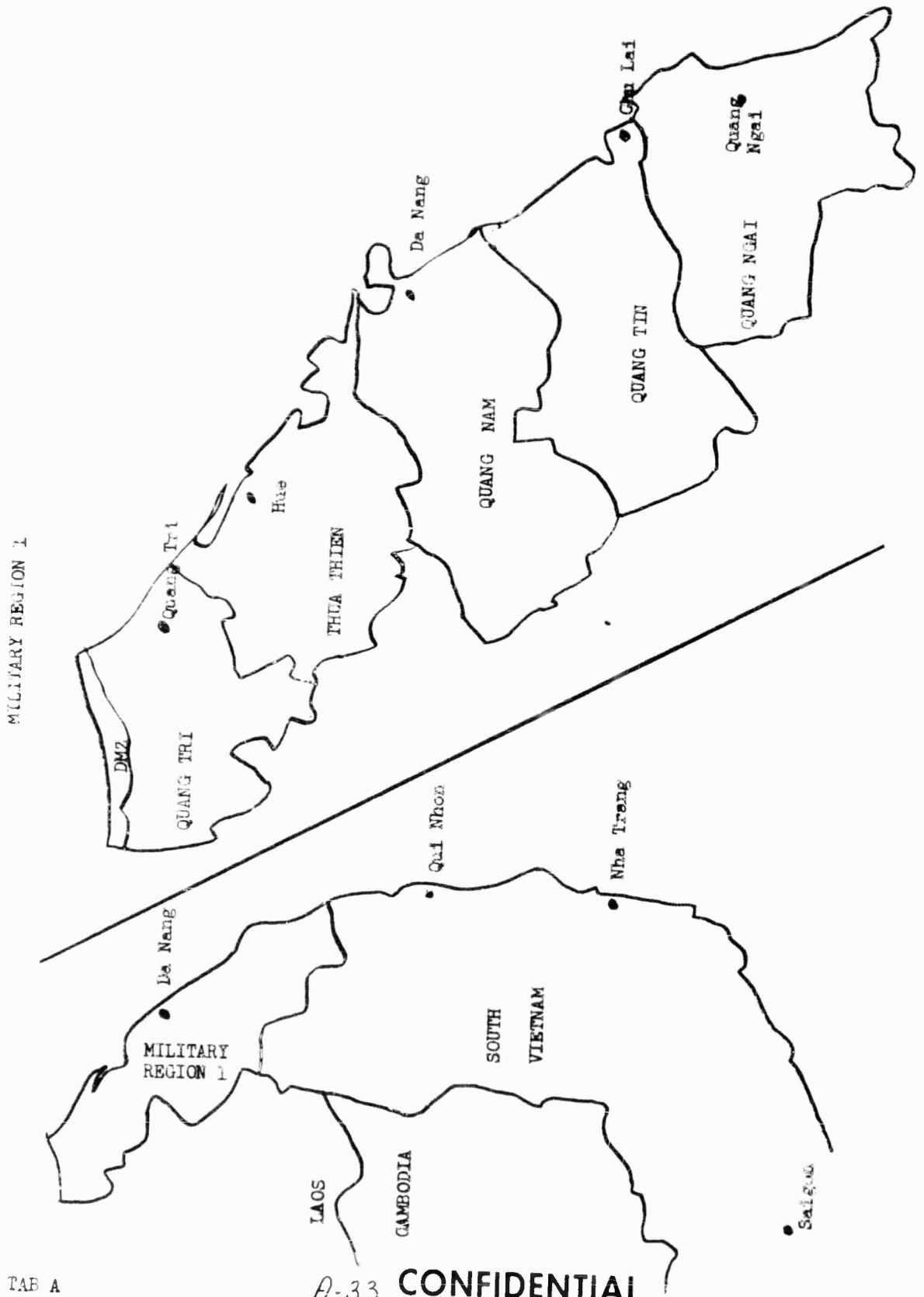
9 TABS

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Tab I w/d HQ DA

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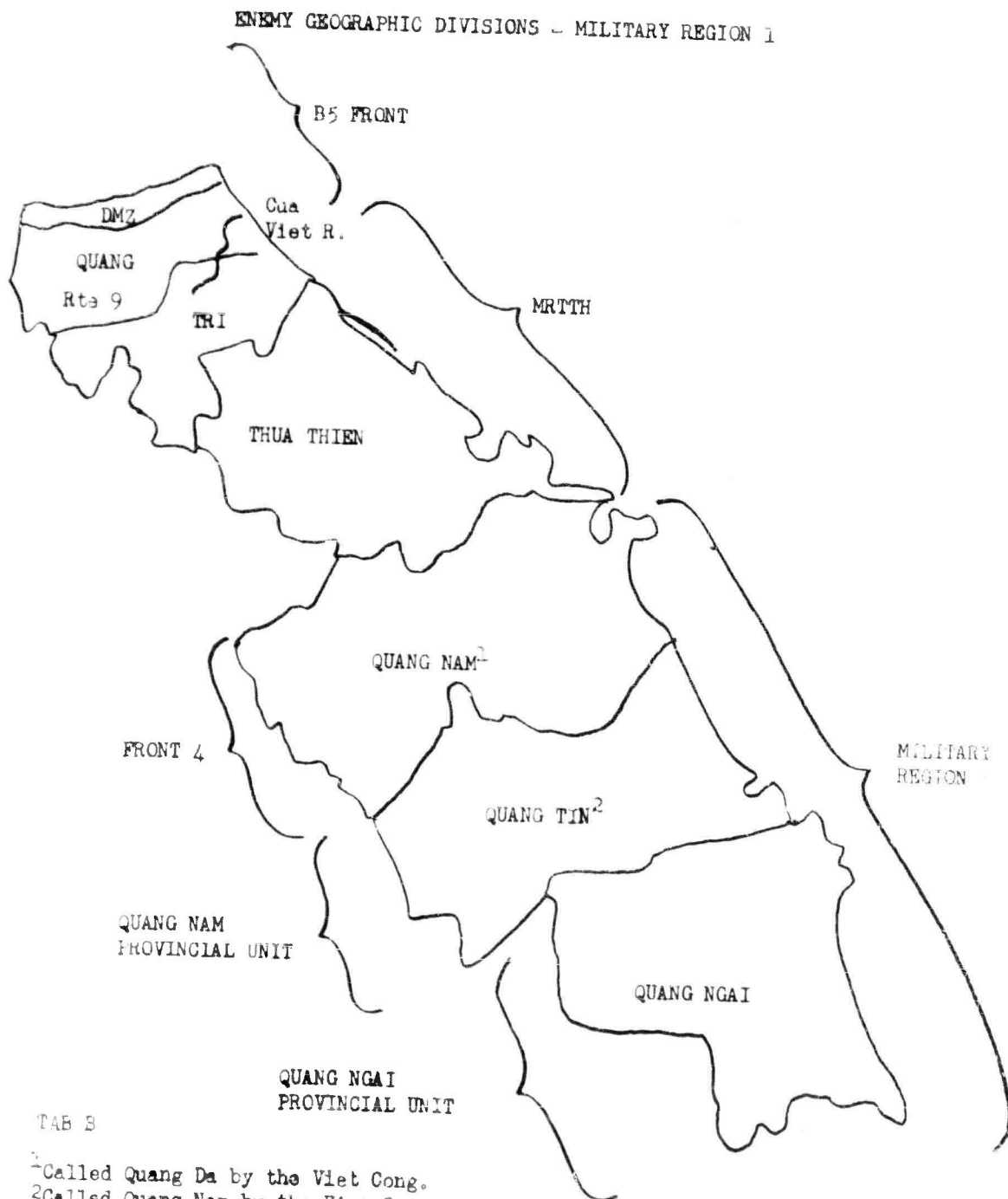


TAB A

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TAB B

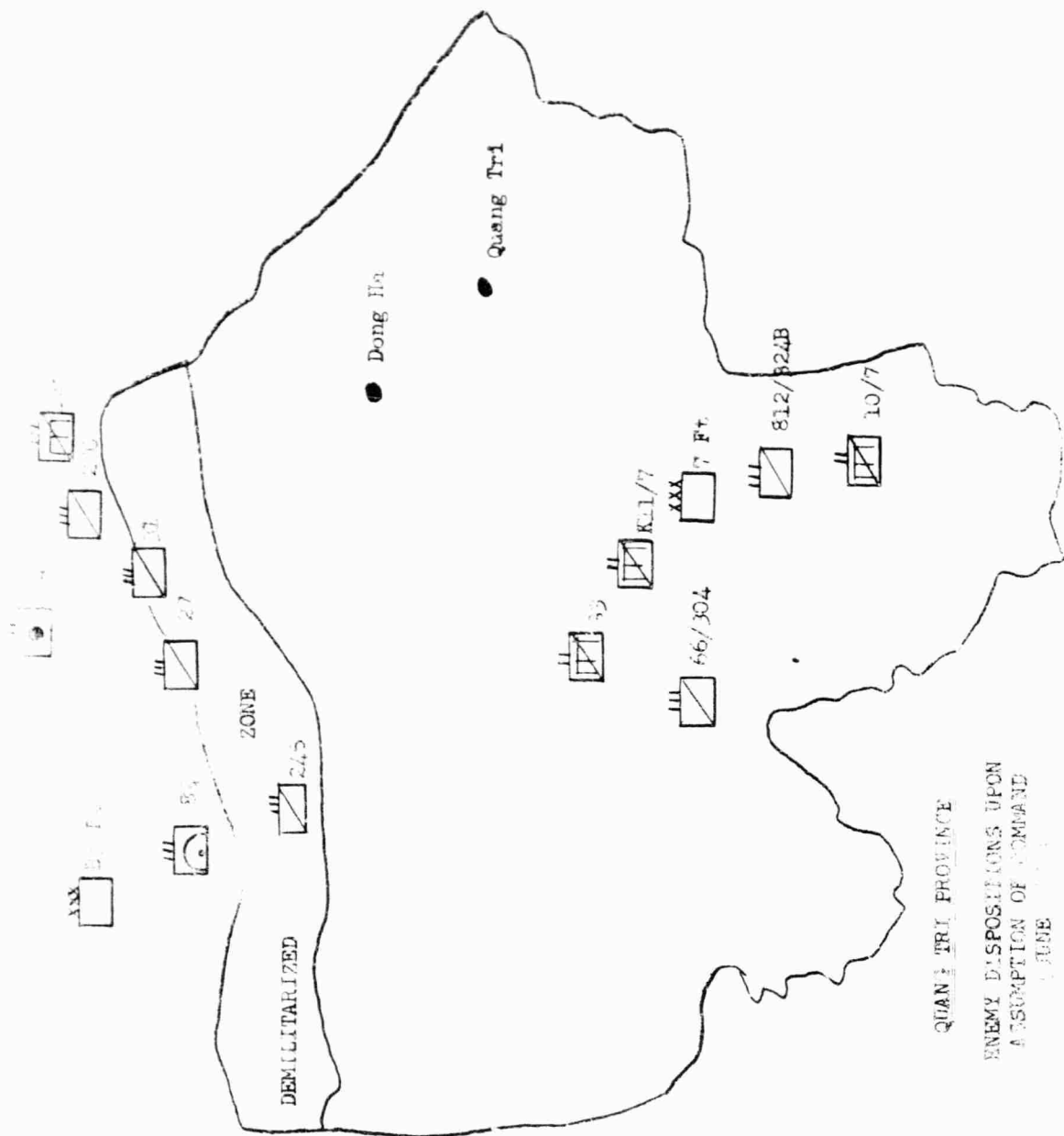
¹Called Quang Da by the Viet Cong.

²Called Quang Nam by the Viet Cong.

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CONFIDENTIAL



- UNLOCATED
- XX 304
 - XX 320
 - XX 325
 - 24B/304
 - 36/325
 - 33/320
 - 52/320
 - 64/320
 - 102/325
 - 128
 - 9/304
 - 88/325
 - 35

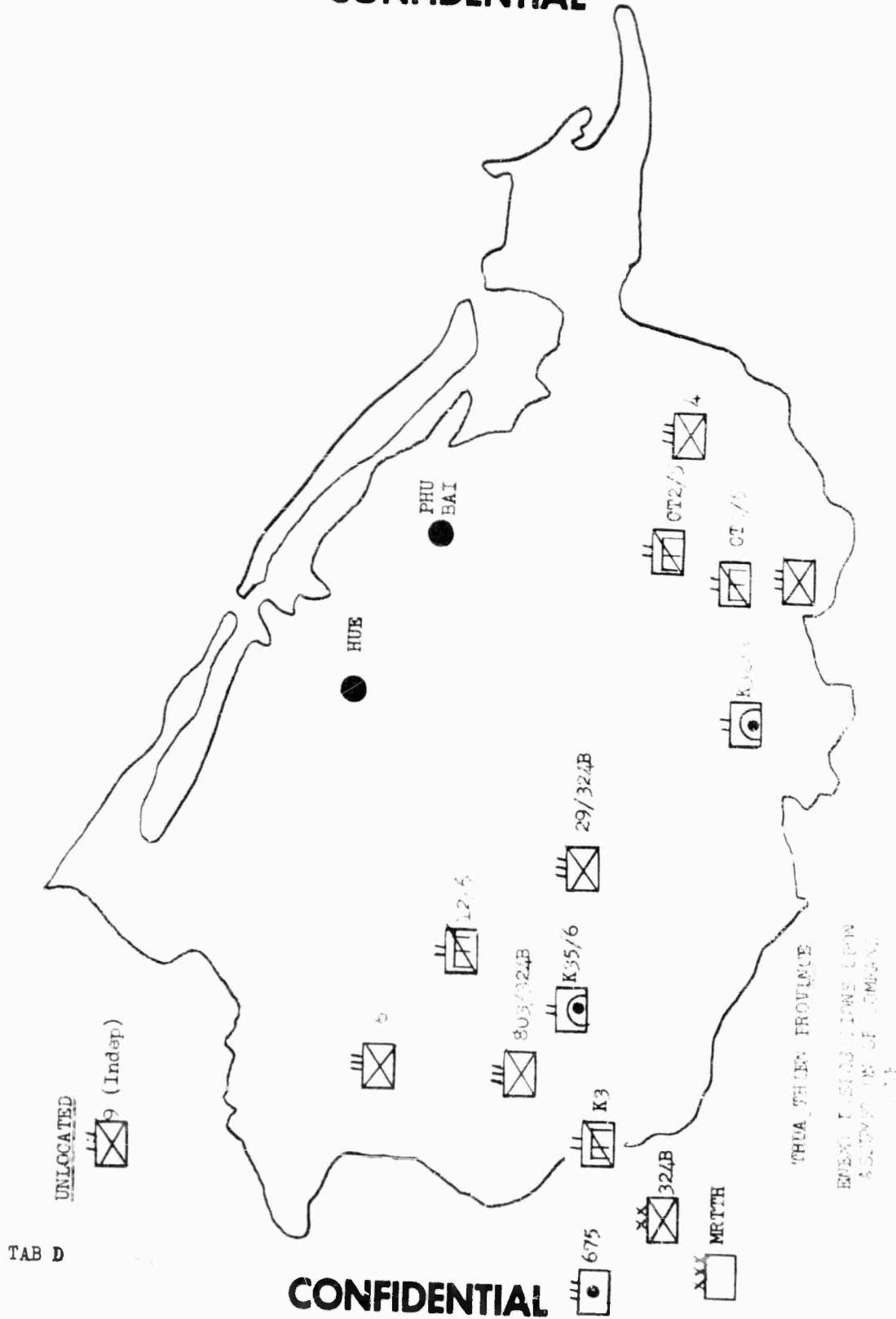
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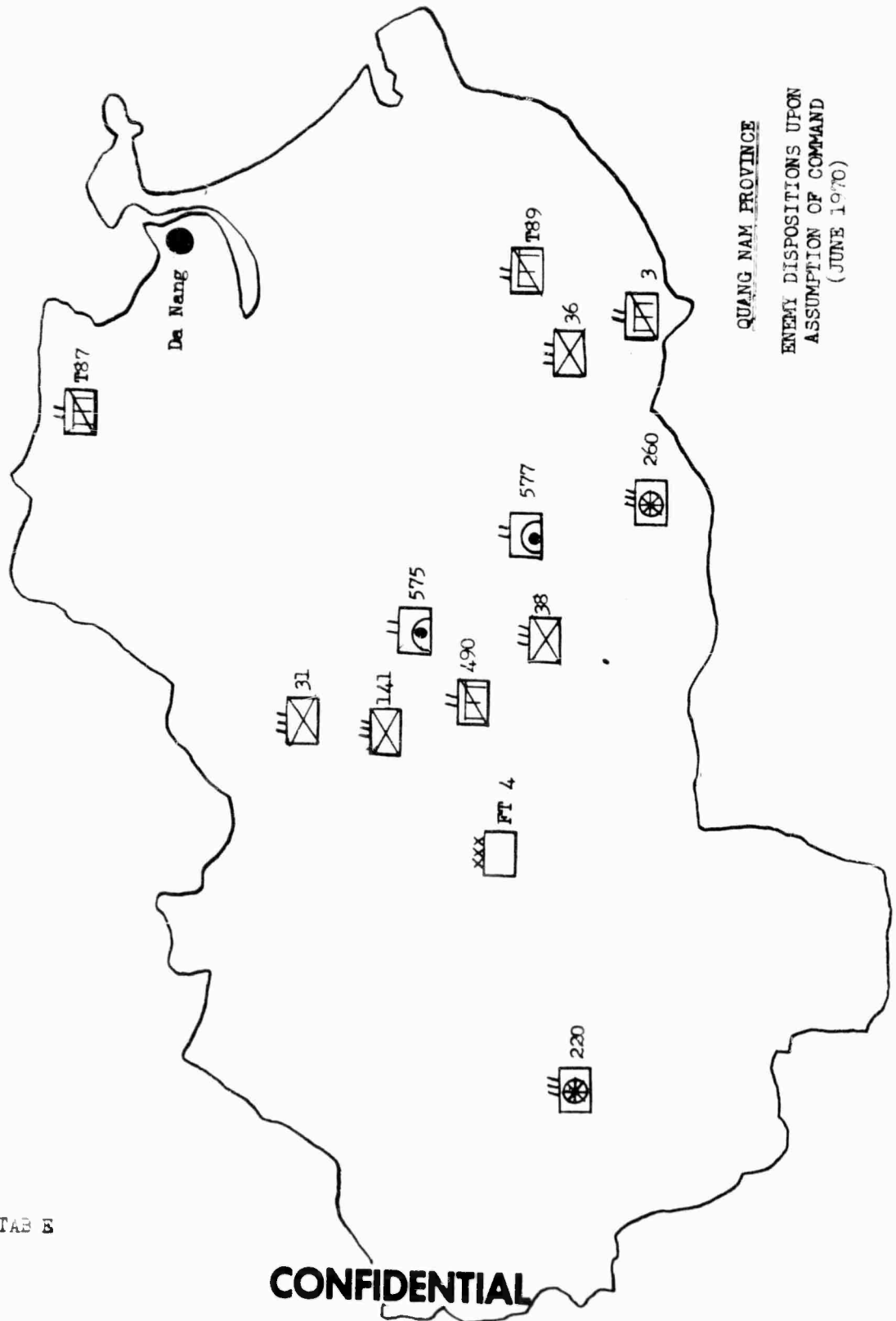


TAB D

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QUANG NAM PROVINCE
ENEMY DISPOSITIONS UPON
ASSUMPTION OF COMMAND
(JUNE 1970)

TAB E

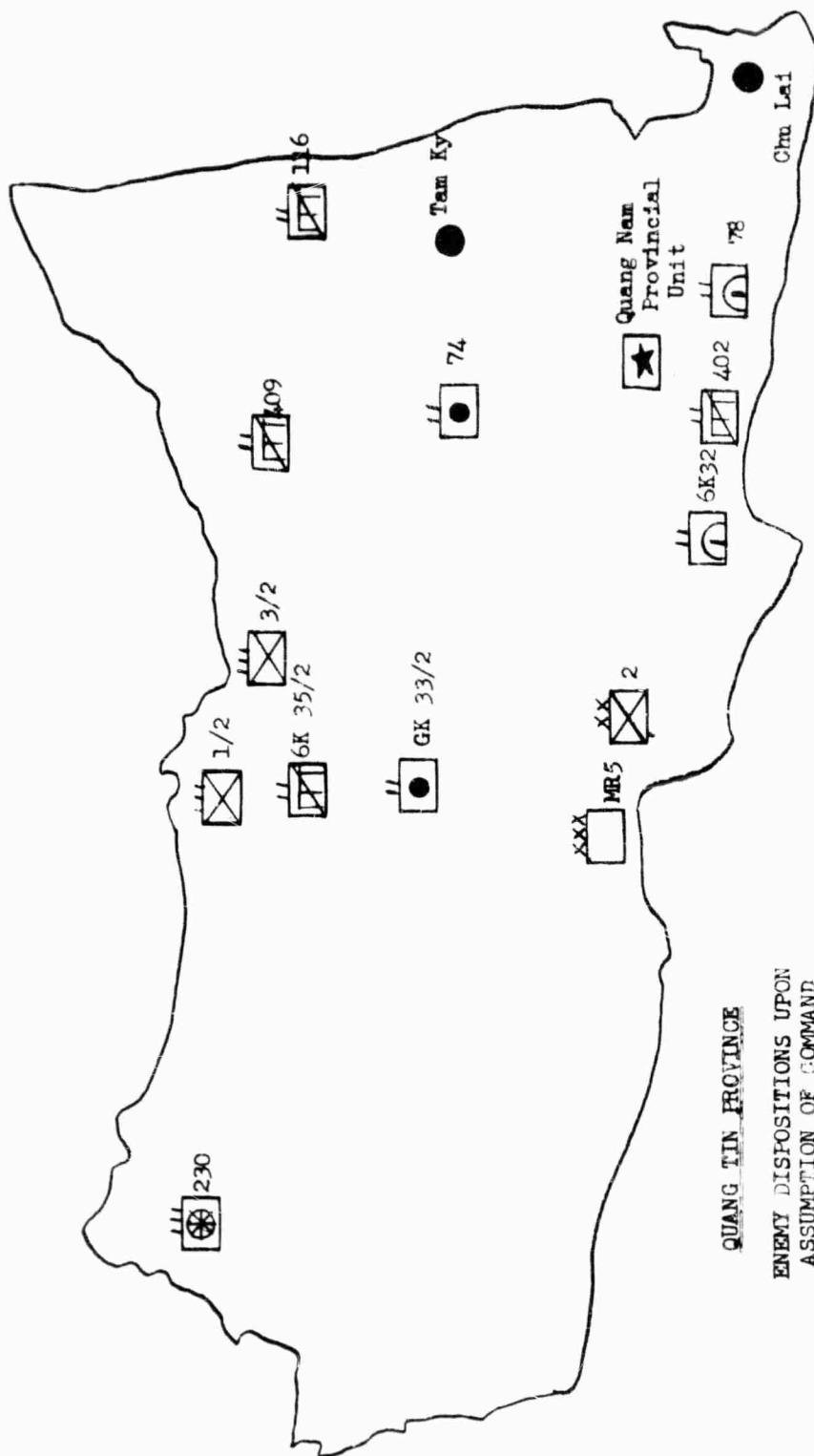
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TAB F



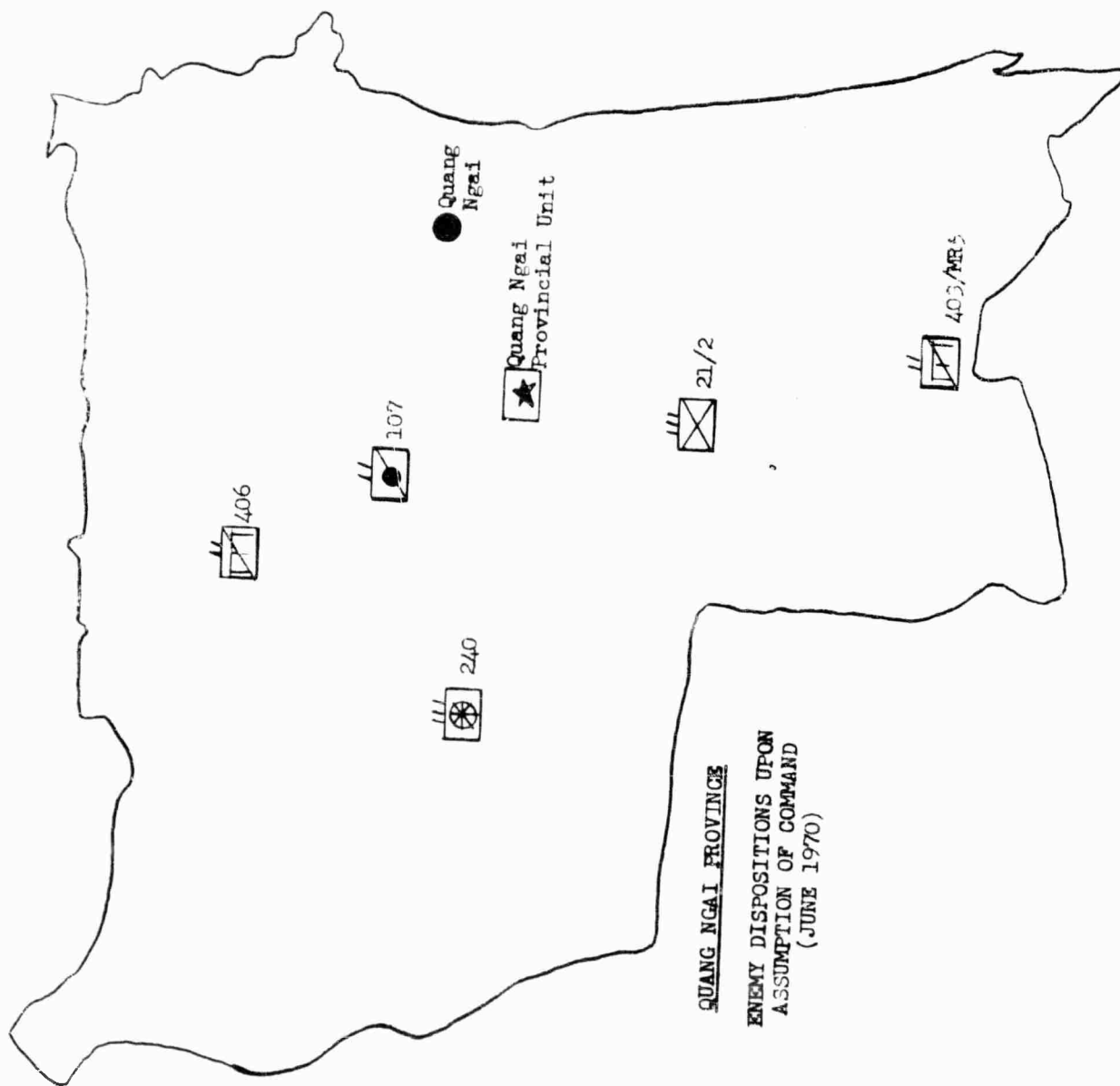
QUANG TIN PROVINCE

ENEMY DISPOSITIONS UPON
ASSUMPTION OF COMMAND
(JUNE 1970)

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TAB G

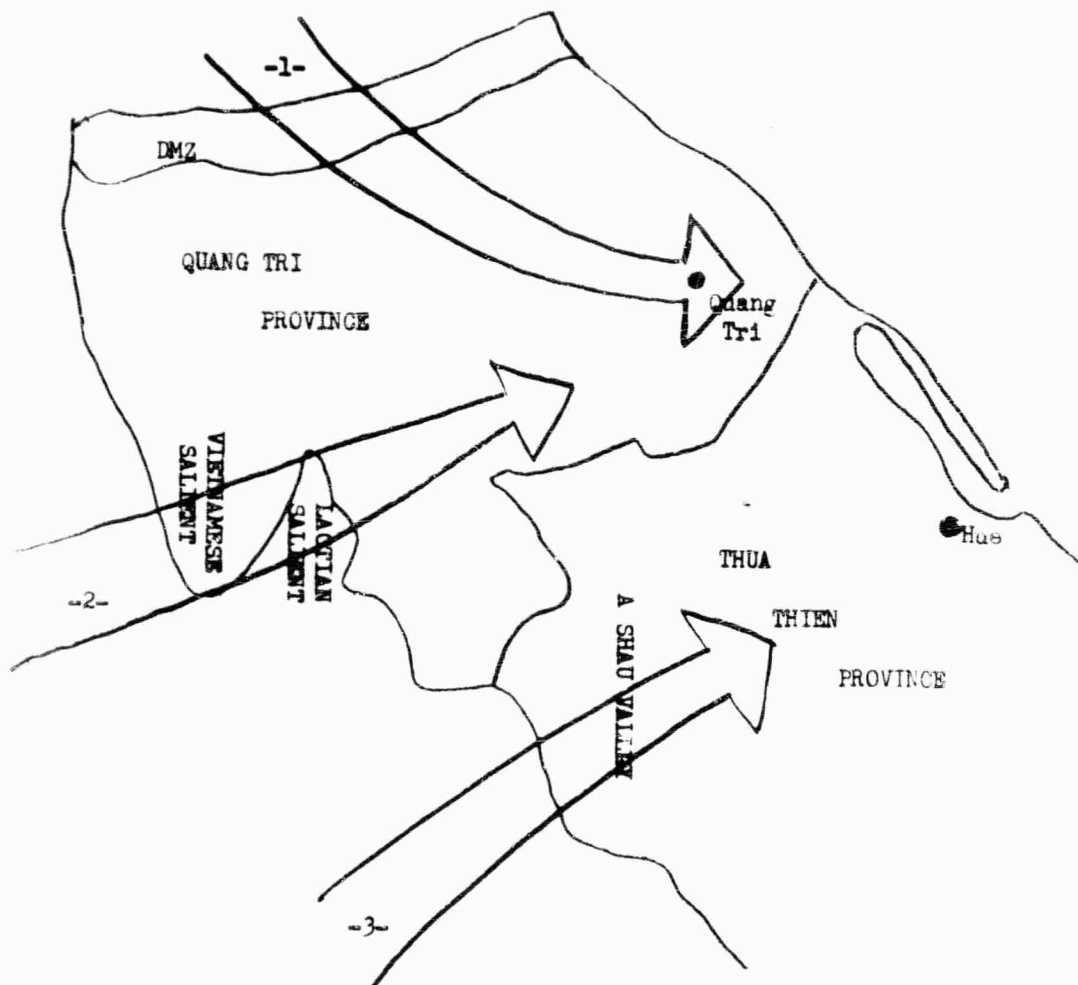
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MAJOR ENEMY THREAT AREAS - NORTHERN MR 1



TAB H

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